UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
LIMITED

E/ECA/POP/4
20 September 1983

Original :
ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Agenda Item 7

Second African Population Conference
(organized in co-operation with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities)

Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania

9 - 13 January 1984

POPULATION AND SPACE IN AFRICA*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The guideline for this document identifies a variety of topics under the following headings : integrated rural development and population policy (migration and the rural sector, production and development process); population distribution and resettlement programmes (policy goals, strategies, policy instruments implementation and evaluation); and urbanization (levels, patterns, causes and consequences). This, no doubt, is a broad topic given the limited space; what follows is therefore a summary of the salient issues presented in rather general terms. In the circumstance, it is not feasible to deal with fine details, more so when it is recalled that Africa is not homogeneous with respect to population size, level and structure of economic development, political system, ecological features etc. There are marked variations between and within the sub-regions - East, West, North, Central and South - and even between countries. A further distinction exists between the land-locked (including the least developed countries), the coastal countries and the oil-exporting countries. All these factors are closely associated with population parameters : growth, distribution, urbanization, migration and policy measures.

II. INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MIGRATION AND THE RURAL SECTOR, PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS)

Migration and the Rural Sector :

2. Africa's population is predominantly rural : in 1980, about 80 percent of the population lived in rural areas. This proportion varies between the sub-regions (see section IV). The rural sector provides employment for more than 70 per cent of the working population, mainly on small family farms, and raw materials for industry. It used to provide sufficient food for both the rural and urban population and, for most countries, it still constitutes the chief foreign exchange earner (UN, 1971). Thus it can be argued that development is in fact rural development, in which case, the problems and prospects of rural development, should, correctly, be perceived as affecting overall development processes.

3. Migration, among the major components of demographic change, exerts the strongest and fastest impact on the development process : it greatly influences, and in turn, is shaped by the employment situation, urbanization, fertility, mortality and age structure of the population. Indeed, all socio-economic policies and programmes have both direct and indirect effects on the relative economic growth rates and income levels in urban and rural areas: these, to a large extent, have shaped the direction and magnitude of migration in Africa, as elsewhere. Migration is not a homogeneous phenomenon in Africa. For example, the prevailing rural migration (colonising, seasonal and temporary labour migration) reflects the varying local resources and opportunities, the cyclical demands for labour between the savannah and forest zones, and the diversity in ecological features and in land tenure arrangements between and within countries.

4. The major migration stream in Africa is rural to rural, logically in view of the predominant rural base of the economy. That is, the majority of migrants originate from and circulate within the rural areas. This a priori reasoning is substantiated by findings from migration studies in Ghana, Tanzania, Nigeria and Cameroun (Gwan 1976; Adepoju, 1978; Livingston, 1981). This section therefore focusses on rural migration as a logical prelude to the discussion on rural development.

5. Contrary to prevailing opinion, the occupational structure in rural Africa is highly diversified, consisting of farming, as small wage sector and a growing informal sector. The last category includes small-scale cottage industries, handicraft, and services (Liedholm, 1973; Ghai and Radwan 1983). Rural employment structure is highly specialised by age, sex, and migration status. Over a large part of Africa, rural migrants tend to engage in manual work which are either scorned by the indigenes or which are tasking for them, and where they do not compete directly with the indigenes. This was the case of rural migrants who once worked in the cocoa plantation and mines in Ghana, or in South Africa's mines.

6. Evidence from rural-based studies suggests that out-migration from rural areas has economic, demographic and social implications. One major consideration relates to the drain of the most energetic, skilled and innovative human resources from the rural areas and implications of this for rural development and agricultural innovation and production (Adepoju, 1978). Thus, the concern in most rural areas in Africa, especially in countries of Southern Africa, is that rural out-migration (to urban areas or outside the country to South Africa) leads to shortage of labour with adverse consequences for food production (resulting from the ageing and replacement of the farm population), technological innovation and local leadership. The result has been increasing reliance on food imports by most African countries, whose primary resources include abundant and fertile land. This has also led to a greater reliance on migrant labour which has become increasingly scare and expensive. Moreover, such labour is not available throughout the year in the required quantity, particularly during the peak periods of clearing, weeding, planting and harvesting. The disappearance of the traditional communal labour exchange tends to accentuate the labour shortage on the farms.

7. It is also argued, however, that out-migration from rural areas and the resulting shortage of family labour could lead to induced technological change including more rational and intensive use of land, labour and capital resources and simple mechanization. While out-migration from rural areas in African countries has probably had the effect of reducing the pressure on farm land, there is little empirical evidence to support the contention that migration and labour shortage in the agricultural areas leads to technological changes, particularly in the use of that increasingly scarce resource, labour. Nevertheless, rural in-migration has been a factor of socio-economic change in the rural sector. Rural-rural migrant labourers have contributed in various ways to the diversification of cropping patterns by exploiting resources hitherto neglected by the indigenes. This is the case of migrant tenant farmers from Eastern Nigeria who have introduced

rice production into the swampy areas of south-west Nigeria while the natives are confined to yam production in the dry zones. In the United Republic of Cameroun, most migrant workers on the plantation and their families have turned to full-time food production to meet the increased demand from the plantation, urban areas and neighbouring Gabon. Here, the natives are traditionally hunters, gatherers and fishermen. The diversification of productive activities also reduces conflict of interest between natives and migrants thus minimizing tension between them (Gwan, 1976).

8. The seasonal migrant workers have constituted the major source of labour in the land-surplus but labour-short cash-cropping areas of the coastal countries e.g. Ghana, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, as well as in Gabon, etc. The supply of labour during peak periods of agricultural activities has, in large measure, promoted agricultural development. In Ghana, the steady supply of migrant workers who performed the arduous tasks which the indigenes scorn stimulated the growth of the cocoa industry there. The decline in the supply of such labour following the large-scale expulsion of non-Ghanaians since 1969 adversely affected agricultural production, particularly cocoa, the country's main foreign exchange earner.

9. The return migration phenomenon, as yet relatively unexplored in the literature, is a familiar pattern in Africa. After a certain spell, most successful migrants eventually return home; during the migration career, some acquired new skills and experiences and a certain working capital. On return home, successful migrants sometimes serve as agents of cultural and socio-economic diffusion, and as a functional link between the rural and the urban sectors (Adepoju, 1983). For instance, return migrants from Ghana to several areas of south-west Nigeria introduced new crops, and were active in communal projects; indeed, the building of schools, hospitals, community centres and related social amenities in the villages were facilitated, at times even financed, by the remittances of migrants. Some return migrants serve as agents of change, and through their new tastes, raise aspirations, introduce new productive techniques and organization and have been known to adopt modern and, at times, novel farming methods. They also participate actively in co-operative farming, credit associations and related activities.

10. Thus the contribution of rural-rural migrants to agricultural production and development derives from their ability to cultivate hitherto unutilized land, diversify production and introduce new crops. However, such contribution to and its net effects on, the economy of origin and destination areas depend largely on the features of the economy at both ends, the characteristics of the migrants and the opportunities available for migrants to apply their skills and incentives.

Rural Development

11. Viewed from a broad perspective, development is a process of socio-economic and political change which increasingly enables people to realise their full human potentials. Hence, rural development involves a concerted effort to improve the quality of life, income, welfare and employment opportunities of the rural population. This process involves concrete measures aimed at reducing and ultimately

eliminating malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, unemployment and under-employment, poor health and living conditions and other indicators of poverty in the rural areas (Lunan, 1976).

12. Rural development is a broad concept which incorporates a series of inter-related activities including : agricultural development; rural extension services; community and cooperative development; human resources and social development; development of rural institutions, and of rural infrastructure. These myriad of activities can, for convenience, be subsumed under : agriculture, education, health, communication and organization (Yiman, 1983). Hence, rural development is a complex issue and involves the specification of well-defined sets of objectives, activities, strategies and action programmes aimed at rural transformation. Following our definition above, rural development is by no means synonymous with agricultural development, although the latter is an important component of rural change.

13. The experience, over the past two decades or so, shows that while a few African countries have achieved rapid economic growth rates (both oil - and export - led), the conditions of living of the vast majority of the population - the rural poor - have in fact worsened : inflation, unequal distribution of income and resources have exacerbated existing inequity. According to Ghai and Radwan (1983), economic growth in Africa has been accompanied by an uneven distribution of benefits and intensified inequalities while living conditions have stagnated, sometimes deteriorated, for the majority of rural dwellers*. The pronounced bias of public expenditure in favour of activities located in the urban areas and the consistent neglect of rural areas in the development of infrastructural facilities accentuated the problems of, especially, the ecologically disadvantaged rural areas e.g. in Niger, Chad, Sudan, Zambia, Botswana, C.A.R., and Mali, and where density per arable land in rural areas is already very high as in Kenya, Rwanda, Egypt and Liberia. Where adequate land to produce sufficient food is not available, some household members have had to augment income by migration or part-time and seasonal employment. Ghai and Radwan (1983) conclude that the "slow growth or stagnation in agriculture is one of the major reasons for the poor overall performance of the economy and the persistence and accentuation of rural poverty in most African countries".

14. Several African countries have experimented with a series of agricultural development strategies aimed at enhancing the incomes of farmers and improving employment opportunities in the rural areas. These programmes include the establishment of Intensive Development Zones and Rural Reconstruction Programme in Zambia the Intensive Package Rural Development projects in Ethiopia; Land Settlement Schemes in Kenya. Cooperative - latter Ujamaa - schemes in Tanzania; the Farm Settlement scheme and establishment of the Rural Development; Sierra Leone's Integrated Agricultural Development Programme etc. (see Adepoju, 1978, for a review). These aim, among other factors, at reducing the imbalance between the

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* The recent publications on Rural-Urban Gap and Income Distribution : (A Comparative Sub-Regional Study) in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Somalia, Kenya, Lesotho, Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, and Liberia by ILO/JASPA are useful ref. here.

urban and rural areas and increasing agricultural productivity. In fact, Tecle (1975: 90) asserts that the 'intensive' package rural development projects in Ethiopia have increased the rate of adoption of yield, increased innovations, and have successfully demonstrated the potential of small farmer development. However, these projects, like others in Nigeria, Zambia etc., are very costly in terms of manpower and financial resources.

15. Some countries with centrally planned socialist-oriented economies, especially Tanzania, Somalia and Zambia, have articulated rural development programmes including village regrouping, agricultural projects, and public work schemes to retain potential migrants in rural areas and, possibly, attract back youths who parasite on the urban economy as unemployed persons. The realisation that the provision of adequate employment opportunities and social infrastructure is required to keep a sizeable proportion of the rural areas there, and the doctrine of popular participation in plan formulation and implementation, in part explains the success so far achieved in some of these countries.

16. As indicated above, Africa is full of paradoxes; in like manner, the rural sector is not homogeneous due to ecological, economic and related factors (ILO. 1979). The economy, resources, socio-cultural milieux, population size, land tenure system, and the ecological factors (which differentiate the savannah from the forest zone) are well marked. Hence, these differences have to be taken into account by planners in any programme aimed at rural development.

17. The integrated approach implies that rural development should be tackled from several sectors including, among others, increased agricultural productivity and enhanced income for the farmers, stimulating the development of small scale industries, craft activities and services and the provision of amenities and infrastructure (FAO, 1983). These could be linked with functional literacy and population education.

18. Integrated rural development programmes should ultimately aim to enhance income and its equitable distribution, improve employment opportunities and reduce the existing disparity in social infrastructure between urban and rural areas. The so-called package approach now adopted in various African countries assistance to farmers in agriculture-related activities, the establishing of physical infrastructure (e.g. rural access roads), services like good water, health services, and good housing, to enhance productivity. However, it is not sufficient to provide rural areas with urban - type facilities: the poor rural dwellers also need the resources and income to enjoy the amenities. This is a necessary but difficult task which implies improvements in agricultural productivity and support services.

19. Adepoju (1978) after a review of rural development programmes in Africa, concluded that "the experience of rural development in Africa shows that is a difficult and slow task; it requires inputs of money, manpower, and structural changes in the prevailing socio-political system ... Various governments have proposed, but few have vigorously pursued, meaningful rural development programmes. What is needed is a more coherent and consistent program of integrated, rather than the prevailing isolated, rural development schemes, backed up by appropriate

institutional, manpower and incentive measures", and the realization that the success of integrated rural development programmes ultimately rests on effective participation and commitment by the rural population.

The Non-Farm Sector

20. Agricultural development policies should embrace employment creation strategies in non-farm sector - crafts, small-scale industries, and public works - in rural areas. In most African countries, the thrust of rural development has hitherto been mainly on enhancing agricultural production and as a result, little attention has been paid to the promotion or development of non-agricultural activities. Yet research into this sector indicates the important role it plays in generating employment and income in rural areas. Liedholm (1973), among others, documents the prevalence of non-farm activities - trading, services, crafts etc. - in rural Africa and concludes that the "fluidity of labour between a number of activities on a seasonal basis is a striking feature of rural Africa". Livingston (1981) also indicates that about 30 percent or more of total urban employment in Kenya is in the informal sector, and about same proportion of rural labour force is engaged in commercial non-farm activities. For some, such activities provide the main source of income while for others, the earnings from non-farm activities supplement the meagre farm income. In most cases, rural workers tend to engage in more than on job (on the farm and craft activities), and families do sponsor members who migrate to the towns to supplement aggregate household income.

21. Thus, the encouragement of non-agricultural activities and, where appropriate, the establishment of small-scale agro-industries and craft activities could contribute to the diversification of the economy, provide additional remunerative employment opportunities, and enhance the income of rural dwellers. In addition, youths could be mobilized to carry out infrastructural development programmes rather than migrate into urban unemployment.

III. URBANIZATION (LEVELS, PATTERNS, CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES)

22. The proportion of the population living in urban areas in Africa is among the lowest in the world regions. In 1980, 29 percent of Africa's population lived in urban areas - ahead of South Asia with 22 percent but much kess than half the proportion in Latin America (69 percent) and the more developed countries (70 percent). This has been the situation in the fifties and sixties : in 1960, for instance, about 18 percent of the population of Africa lived in urban areas; this trails the situation in Asia (21 percent) but contrasts sharply with Latin Americas' 49 percent (Hauser and Gardner, 1980). Indeed, up to 1970, Africa had the lowest percentage of urban population of any world region, and with the exception of South Asia, is expected to remain so till the end of this century (see Table 1). Thus, by the year 2000, the projected proportion of Latin America's urban population of 75 percent will be only slightly below the level attained by developed countries, but much ahead of Africa's 45 percent, and more than double Asia's 39 percent (see Table 1).

23. It is important to note here that the estimates of the total and urban population, and hence, the proportion urban, vary from one source to another, reflecting the underlying assumptions used. Hence there is need for caution in comparing estimates from several sources especially in the African situation where the data base is weak. The information presented in tables 1 to 3 have been based on a set of such assumptions and the estimates may not necessarily tally with those of other sources e.g. the E.C.A.

24. The level of urbanization varies markedly among the sub-regions of Africa. Urban tradition is more recent in East and Central Africa compared to North and West Africa. East Africa is the least urbanized : in 1980, less than 18 percent of the population lived in towns. West Africa ranks next to East Africa while in North Africa, 44 percent of the population lived in urban areas. The highest percent of the population urban (49 percent) is recorded for South African sub-region. By the end of this century, North Africa is projected to lead other sub-regions in the proportion of its population urban, with West and East Africa lagging further behind (Adedeji, 1979).

25. As Addo (1981) emphasized, the level of urbanization in the sub-regions reflects, to a larger extent, the level of economic development of the countries. Thus, the proportion of the population living in urban areas varies from a low 2.4 to 7.1 percent in "the poor and less densely populated" areas of the Sahel (Niger, Upper Volta, Mali) and land-locked countries (ranked among the poorest of the world's poor countries) to 27-35 percent in more densely populated and relatively more prosperous coastal countries. Since cities are, in general, expected to reach a relatively advanced stage of urbanization and development for women to predominate in cityward migration, (at which stage their enhanced education and the expansion of the services sector facilitate their absorption in the labour market), few African urban areas have a balanced sex ratio. The exception is West Africa where women are found in large number in towns as traders.

26. The low level of urbanization contrasts sharply with the rate of growth of urban areas. The general picture in Africa is that of fast growth rate of urban areas, remarkably higher than the rate of population growth. With the exception of a few countries with small population size, the rate of urban population growth triples, and in some cases is more than five times, the rate of growth of the total population which itself averages between 2.5 and 3.5 percent per year. The rate of urban population growth in Africa averaged 3.9 percent per annum in the period 1920-50. The peak of urban population growth rate was observed for the decade 1970-80, being 5 percent per year, and is expected to decline only slightly to 4.8 percent per year in the period 1980-2000 (Hauser and Gardner). In Zambia for instance, urban areas recorded a growth rate of 6.7 per cent in 1980 and the major cities are growing at over 10 per cent per year. Lagos, Dar-es-Salaam, Dakar, Nairobi, Mbabane each been growing at annual rates averaging 7 to 15 percent during the 1970-80 decade. The rapid rate of growth of urban areas has been sustained by the high rate both of natural increase and accelerated in migration (from within and across national borders).

27. It is estimated that over two fifths of the growth of cities in Africa and 40-50 percent in West Africa is attributable to in-migration from rural areas and smaller urban places as well as from beyond the national boarder (Addo, 1981). The contribution of migration is both direct, in terms of the initial stream of migrants and indirect, deriving from their characteristics : migrants consist predominantly of young persons (age 15-39) at the prime of reproductive performances and in most cases they import their rural reproductive norms to the towns (Adepoju 1983). The high natural increase in the towns is explained by the rapidly declining mortality while fertility remains high, sometimes increasing.

28. As table 3 shows, up to the 1970-80 decade, the increase in urban population in Africa absorbed less than 50 percent of total increase in population. Hence forth, a higher proportion of the increase will be accounted for by natural increase rather than migration per se. Thus, it is projected that rural to urban migration will be relatively small in relation to total population increase in Africa and other developing regions. That is, more and more, natural increase rather than migration and reclassification of localities will account for the lion share of the urban population growth.

29. The path of colonial development strategies focussed primarily on promoting exports and was geared towards the development of the urban-industrial centres. The concentration of administrative, economic and political functions- and indeed of employment and related opportunities - in few towns had the effect of attracting migrants from villages and smaller towns. The concentration of developmental efforts in one city, the capital, thus became a distinctive characteristic of urbanization in Africa. The small population and weak economy of most African countries precluded the development of several dispersed urban industrial centres (Adepoju, 1983). The high degree of such population concentration in Africa's cities is particularly evident in Malawi, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Guinea and Sierra-Leone where 80 percent of the urban population live in cities. To give just one example, the population of Greater Manzini and Mbabane in Swaziland together comparised 63 percent of the urban population 1966; this increased to 69 percent by 1976.

30. Thus, another salient feature of the urban scene in Africa is the high degree of concentration of the urban population in the cities. In 1960, for example, 74 percent of Africa's urban population lived in cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants. This proportion is much higher now, both at the country and regional level.

31. Although there were only three cities of one million or more people in 1960, that number is estimated to rise to 19 cities by 1985, representing 42 percent of Africa's urban population. Africa's largest city - Cairo-Gaza-Imbaba- had a population of 6.4 million in 1975 and is estimated to increase to 10 million in 1990, rising to 13.1 million by the year 2000 (Hauser and Gardner 1980). The high concentration of population in large cities and the emergence of big cities have exacerbated the low attraction and relative stagnation of the few medium- sized towns (Adepoju, 1983).

32. The phenomenal rate of growth of capital cities in Africa, especially since the 1960 decade, results from the accelerated in-migration from small towns and villages, itself induced by the concentration of developmental efforts in one city. The multifarous functions of major cities as centres of administration, education, commerce and industry and social facilities have, in turn, reinforced the motivations for migrants and play a leading role in the process of urbanization in Africa. The major cities in Africa especially Lagos, Dakar, Dar-es-Salaam, Abidjan are, as a result, plagued by the adverse effects of rapid growth and change : urban sprawl, unemployment and delinquency among young school leavers and inadequate social services which are features of 'exploding' cities in poor economies. Thus, the salient features of the urban scene in Africa include the relatively low level of urbanization, and the recency of this urban explosion. The rate of urban growth is high and a large proportion of the urban population is concentrated in the capital city, severely straining the social services there.

33. In contrast to the traditional view that urban centres provide the pivot for the "process of social development and change within the less developed regions of the world", the problems of traffic congestion and transport inadequacies, growing unemployment and under-employment, shortage of decent housing and deterioration of urban social systems are symptoms of the "urban crisis" that now plague African, and other developing, countries and pose a serious challenge to urban planners and administrators (Bugnicourt, 1981).

34. For now, the current rate of open unemployment in Africa's urban areas is estimated at 10 percent of the urban labour force. This ignores the underemployed persons who account for an estimated 26 percent of the labour force in the urban areas and 40 percent in the rural areas. It is no longer in doubt that these features, and the rapid rate of urban population growth will, from now till the end of the century, have serious implications for food, housing, education, health services, job opportunities and social amenities in the urban areas, and indeed nation-wide (Adepoju, 1979).

35. It should be noted, however, that the "residual dualism" among urban residents in developing countries, Africa in particular, makes the city less alienating and disintegrative than researchers usually assume, the reason being that a sizeable proportion of migrants of rural origin settle in the periphery of the town, engage in informal sector activities with precarious incomes, at least initially, and merely transfer their rural living patterns to the town, sheltered by a network of kith and kin who have earlier paved the migration route. Nevertheless, the gloomy picture of the urban dwellers in Africa by the year 200, depicted in Addo's observation that "the majority of them will live under conditions of over-crowding, unemployment and even pauperization. The rapid growth of these cities will lead to proliferation of slums and ghettoes, environmental and industrial pollution, and poor economic and social conditions in general" (Addo 1981 12) deserves very serious consideration by African planners and policy makers.

IV. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMMES

36. The distribution of population in Africa shows marked variations between ecological zones especially the coastal countries and the interior, including the land-locked countries: this also reflects historical and economic factors. By 1981, only 10 percent of the world's population lived in Africa which accounts for over one-fourth of the world's land area.

37. Within the continent, countries with small population size - Djibouti, Guinea Bissau, Gabon, Gambia, Swaziland, Botswana, are juxtaposed with those with big population - Ethiopia, Zaire, Nigeria and Egypt. Some are sparsely populated - Sudan, Gabon, Chad - while others including small island States which are very densely settled, reflecting differences in land area, ecological factors and past demographic trends. Indeed, Africa is the home of a large number of countries with small population size. In 1975, for instance, 17 African countries had (estimated) population of less than one million, including those with less than 500,000 people each; another 17 countries had populations ranging between one and five million persons. By 1981, the situation had changed only little: 13 countries still had estimated population of less than one million inhabitants each. Infact, Nigeria, Egypt, Ethiopia and Zaire - the four most populous countries - between them accounted for 40 percent of the total population of the continent in 1978.

38. The prevailing population distribution in Africa derives from historical, economic, ecological and demographic factors. The slave trade no doubt left long term impact on the spatial distribution (historically) and population growth in Gabon, Angola, Northern Sudan and the middle belt countries of West Africa (Adepoju, 1982). The existence of pockets of infertility and low fertility especially in Zaire, Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, Northern Cameroun, Upper Volta, Senegal, Sudan Tanzania and Uganda is one of the paradoxes in the study of African demography in a continent where fertility is generally very high, indeed the highest in the world.

39. Ecological factors have, in various ways, influenced population distribution. In Somalia and Sudan, the nomadic population (10 percent in Sudan, 66 percent in Somalia in the 70s) literally live an "unsettled" life (Khogali, 1981). Besides, the economy of the coastal forest zone constrasts sharply with the dry savannah in the hinterland, especially the Sahel region. The arid zone and desert/semi-desert regions are sparsely settled, as are the unhabitable areas in Chad, Mali, Niger, Western Sahara, Mauritania and Sudan. On the other hand, the coastal countries are areas of relatively dense settlements, especially the urban centres.

40. The salient features of the distribution of population in Africa include the rapid rate of growth of urban areas, the prevailing high rate of growth of the total, including the rural population the remarkable degree of population concentration in the major cities and the widely dispersed settlement pattern. This last feature, and the rapidly growing urban areas pose considerable problems to planners in providing

social amenities to the widely scattered settlements in hamlets of a few people (eg. in Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) or the burgeoning cities like Lagos, Dakar, Lusaka etc. The absence of medium sized towns logically derives from the numerical superiority of the chief city (ies) where virtually the major social, economic and related services are located (Adepoju, 1982).

41. The coexistence of several, dispersed small villages, indeed hamlets, with a few cities, pose serious problems of providing social amenities especially in Sierra Leone, Niger, Swaziland, CAR and Chad where a substantial proportion of the population live in scattered homesteads or in Sudan, Somalia, Mali, among others, with sizeable proportion of nomadic population. In Kenya, for instance, Oucho pointed out that the bulk of the population inhabit the Central-South Western-Coastal axis of the country. Thus, according to him, "the most striking feature of the spatial distribution of population is the emptiness of most of the country. More than half of the country to the north and east is a vast sparsely populated area" (Oucho, 1979: 36).

42. Population distribution is an area of interest to planners and policy makers in Africa; indeed the mal-distribution of population, rather than the rapid rate of population growth or high fertility, is regarded as the main population problem by planners in Africa. As a result, the vast majority of planners believe strongly that the demographic obstacle to development lies in the "irrational" distribution rather than the rapid rate of growth of their population (UN, 1980). The mal-distribution problems can be examined from both the urban and rural ends: the overcrowded cities and the sparsely populated, overfarmed rural areas (Abumere, 1981). It can be argued that the sparse population distribution in most countries has for long dominated the attitude of planners to issues of population policy in general.

43. As table 4 shows, 73 percent of all African countries regard the distribution of their population as "inappropriate". It is significant that the highest proportion - 80 per cent - of Governments who regard their population distribution as'inappropriate' are in Central Africa (see above). The corresponding percentages are 81 percent, 62 percent, 67 percent, and 50 percent for West, East, North and South Africa, respectively. Equally important is the fact that no single country considered the prevailing population distribution acceptable and only 6 percent considered it partly unacceptable.

44. However, in spite of the concern shown by planners about the uneven distribution of their population, few African countries have in fact adopted, and vigorously pursued policies to modify the undesirable configuration of settlement patterns. That is, quite apart from the statement of intention, few governments have actually taken positive action to effect the desired change in this undesirable trend. That is, few of the Governments among the 73 percent who regarded their population as extremely unacceptable have in fact advocated and in practice pursued radical intervention mechanism.

45. Population distribution policy can be viewed as direct or explicit policy, the aim being to change existing population distribution; it could be implicit or indirect, aimed at effecting some change other than population distribution (Pryor and Kosinski, 1978). In effect, it is an aspect of the broad area of population policy. In order therefore to effectively concretise this, there is the need to clearly stipulate the objectives, goals, the target population and mechanism for implementation and methods of assessing the effectiveness of population distribution policies. What follows is a discussion of the African situation in concretising population redistribution policies, albeit indirectly.

46. Policy instruments - both direct and indirect - can be viewed in terms of incentives and disincentives to migrating to specific localities. The incentive policies are intended to attract and retain population to designated areas while disincentives are geared at discouraging, prohibiting or compelling movement (pryor and Kosinski, 1978).

47. Population redistribution strategies take several forms : rural development, urban development and renewal; resettlement programmes; administrative decentralization; promoting the growth of secondary centres; industrial estates and new towns; and accommodationist policies in both urban and rural areas.

48. A few settlement scenes have been set up in Africa. Examples of these include the Ujamaa scheme in Tanzania, the Kainji Lake and Bakalori Dam in Nigeria, the "million-acre" settlement scheme in Kenya; the Awash Valley in Ethiopia, the agricultural settlement scheme for nomads in Somalia; the sedentanzation of nomads in Sudan and Mali etc. (see Table 5).

49. Indeed be emphasised that population redistribution policies in Africa - especially the types included in table 5 - as elsewhere are most often introduced for non-demographic reasons; these include economic, strategic and political considerations. In Tanzania, for instance, the villagization scheme introduced in 1972 was in fact "a logical step in the implementation of the policy of socialism and self reliance. A systematic creation of villages nation-wide was vigorously pursued with the objective of bringing people together into nucleared settlements... and where social services could be provided to the largest number of people at least cost" (Maro and Mlay 1979). However, the effect was a massive redistribution of population to the extent that by 1976, two-thirds of the population of Tanzania lived in villages.

50. Since independence, a wide range of resettlement programmes have been included in national plan documents - some have been executed, others have, for a variety of reasons, remained domant. These include, settlement schemes for small-scale farmers, redistribution of land among the landless poor on a more equitable basis etc. Indeed, the I.L.O. (1979) noted that the widespread poverty and growing inequality in Africa can be explained by the unequal distribution of productive assets, especially land ownership. This is especially the case in most rural Africa; the landless poor in Kenya; people from marginal areas in the poor, overfarmed land as in Eastern Nigeria, the Fra-fra of Ghana who live in the over-populated areas etc.

51. In Nigeria, the physical constraint to the rapid expansion of Lagos was an ostensible reason for shifting the capital to Abuja in the interior. Apart from strategic considerations, there are also political factors involved in the shifting of a nation's capital as is, for instance, the recent shift of Ivory Coast's capital from Abidjan to Yamoussoukro, coincidentally the village where the nation's President was born. Nevertheless the theme "recentralisation in order to decentralise" is appealing since Abidjan is said to be "over-crowded".

52. The evaluation of the effectiveness of population redistribution policies in Africa is a difficult task partly because the objectives, goals and targets were initially not precisely stated; or because such policies are undertaken for non-demographic reasons. In all cases in Africa, data is not available or is inadequate for evaluating the policy's impact. Where a system of continuous monitoring is not built into the policy measures, it becomes a speculative exercise as policy objectives even implementation mechanism change with time and political/economic climate (Adepoju, 1982). At any rate, as Adepoju (1982) reiterated, " few African countries have formulated and set out instruments for implementing migration policies aimed at slowing down rural exodus, reducing rural out-migration or channelling urban migrants to selected destination, encouraging or restricting migration to major cities or coping with such migration by incentive or coercive measures".

53. The experience of African countries that have articulated and implemented agricultural resttlement programmes and related schemes shows that only few people are affected and the population redistributive impact has been very minimal. The high cost, weak administrative infrastructure and poor intersectoral linkages at the execution stage sometimes seriously affect the success of such schemes (Mabogunje, 1981).

V. CONCLUSION

54. The demographic picture of Africa - crude birth rate and death rate of 46 and 20 per thousand, respectively, and a growth rate of 2.6 percent per year - makes the continent the fastest growing in the world. Her economic base is weak and the population size of a large number of the countries is small indeed. In fact, 72 percent of the poorest among least developed countries of the world are in Africa. The ecological factors, reinforced by economic situation, have largely shaped population distribution while the strategy of development has strongly influenced the direction of migration a major factor in population redistribution. In all, the rural areas have stagnated while the urban areas are burdened by the adverse effects of excessive growth. In an attempt to check rural exodus, cope with the rapidly increasing urban population and correct the "irrational" population distribution, a few African countries have implemented selected programmes which have implicit population redistributional effects. It is noted that the data base for monitoring the effectiveness of these policies is weak, more so when these are usually designed for non-demographic objectives. It is suggested that policies relating to migration, rural development, urban renewal and indeed population redistribution in general be viewed in a comprehensive way and integrated into overall development, and where applicable, population policy, in order to maximize resources and results.

TABLE 1 : Percentage of the Population Urban in Africa, Latin America and Asia, 1920-2000

Period	Africa	Latin America	Asia
1920	7.0	22.4	8.3
1930	9.2	27.9	10.3
1940	10.4	30.8	12.9
1950	11.4	40.6	15.7
1960	18.2	49.4	20.8
1970	22.9	57.4	23.8
1980	28.9	64.8	27.4
1990	35.7	70.7	32.3
2000	42.5	75.2	38.9

Source : Hauser and Gardner (1980)

TABLE 2 : Average Annual Growth Rate of Urban Population : Africa, Latin America and Asia, 1920-2000

Period	Africa	Latin America	Asia
1920-30	4.1	4.1	2.5
1930-40	2.9	2.9	3.3
1940-50	4.6	5.1	3.0
1950-60	4.4	4.8	4.6
1960-70	4.9	4.2	3.5
1970-80	5.0	3.9	3.6
1980-90	5.0	3.6	3.6
1990-2000	4.6	3.1	3.5
1920-1950	3.9	4.0	2.9
1950-2000	4.8	3.9	3.8
1980-2000	4.8	3.3	3.6

Source : Hauser and Gardner (1980).

TABLE 3 : Urban Increase As Percentage of Total Increase : Africa, Latin America and Asia 1920-2000

Decade	Africa	Latin America	Asia
1920-30	23.9	55.6	25.8
1930-40	13.1	44.6	36.0
1940-50	41.1	79.0	43.7
1950-60	33.7	76.9	46.5
1960-70	39.2	82.8	36.6
1970-80	48.2	88.3	42.5
1980-90	56.3	90.1	54.6
1990-2000	63.4	91.5	74.2
1920-1950	28.2	62.8	36.0
1950-2000	52.9	87.6	52.9
1980-2000	60.3	90.9	64.7

Source : Hauser and Gardner (1980).

TABLE 4 . GOVERNMENT PERCEPTION AND POLICIES REGARDING POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, AFRICA, 1980

Sub-regions	Perception of over-all acceptability of spatial distribution			Policies regarding basic trends in internal migration				Policies regarding modification of rural and urban configuration of settlement			
	Appropriate	Partly appropriate	Inappropriate	Accelerate	No intervention	Decelerate	Reverse	No modification	Rural configuration	Urban configuration	Rural and configuration
Northern Africa	-	2	4	-		6	-	1	1	-	4
Western Africa	-	3	13	-	6	9	1	7	3	-	6
Eastern Africa	-	6	10	-	3	11	2	3	8	-	5
Central Africa	-	1	8	-	1	5	3	1	4	-	4
Southern Africa	-	2	2	-	1	2	1	2	0	-	2
Africa		14	37	-	11	33	7	14	16	-	21

Source : UN. 1980.

TABLE 5 : TYPES OF POPULATION REDISTRIBUTION POLICIES IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Country	Policy type			
	Rural development	Resettlement schemes	Youth programmes	Growth poles, administrative decentralization
Ethiopia	Chilalo (1967) Wolamo (1970) Ada (1972) Agric. Development Units	Awash Valley scheme[a]		
Ghana		Volta Dam Resettlement Scheme (1964) 82 000 people	Workers Brigade	
Kenya	Special Development Programme (1975)[a]	Resettlement schemes (1962) 51 766 families; Land Redistribution (8000 settlers)		
Liberia				Promotion of growth centres (1975)[a]
Nigeria	Integrated Rural Development (1975)[a]	Farm Settlement Scheme (1961) 46 000 settlers; Kainji Lake Resettlement (1963) 43 000 persons, 12 5000 workers	National Youth Service Corps (1964: 15 000 youths by 1978)	Creation of 12 states (1967) later 19 states (1975). Proposed shift of capital from Lagos to Abuja (1975)[a]
Sierra Leone	Integrated Rural Development (1972)[a]			
Somalia		Resettlement of nomads/fishermen (1975: 129 600 persons); Agric. Settlement	Agricultural Crash Programme (1970: 11 000 persons in 1976) Revolutionary Youth Camps (1970: 4000 youths in 1976).	

country	Policy type			
	Rural development	Resettlement schemes	Youth programmes	Growth poles, administrative decentralization
Tanzania	Ujamaa Rural socialism (1967)	Ujamaa villagization (1967): about 2 million people in 57 000 ujamaa villages by 1973		Administrative decentralization shifting of capital from Dar-es-Salaam to Dodoma.
Zambia	Intensive Development Zones[a]		Rural Reconstruction Programme (1975): 40 000 settlers	
Swaziland	Rural Development Areas[a]			
Zaire	Regional Development Programme (1977)[a]			

Note : [a] policy advocated, not (fully) implemented.

Source : Adepoju (1982)

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